



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 4, 2016

Ms. Ashley D. Fourt
Assistant Criminal District Attorney
County of Tarrant
401 West Belknap
Fort Worth, Texas 76196-0201

OR2016-21267A

Dear Ms. Fourt:

This office issued Open Records Letter No. 2016-21267 (2016) on September 21, 2016. We have examined this ruling and determined we will correct the previously issued ruling. *See generally* Gov't Code § 552.011 (providing that Office of Attorney General may issue decision to maintain uniformity in application, operation, and interpretation of Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code). Consequently, this decision serves as the correct ruling and is a substitute for the decision issued on September 21, 2016. Your request was assigned ID# 636840.

The Tarrant County Purchasing Department (the "county") received a request for the winning proposals related to requests for proposals numbers 2012-138, 2015-71, and 2016-011. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of ABLe Communications, Inc. ("ABLe"); All-Fair Electric, Inc. ("All-Fair"); Basecom, Inc. ("Basecom"); Cable Electric, Inc. ("Cable"); Cleaver Electric, Inc. ("Cleaver"); Dennis Electric ("Dennis"); Humphrey & Associates, Inc. ("Humphrey"); Lone Star Electric ("Lone Star") and Parker Electric ("Parker"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified ABLe, All-Fair, Basecom, Cable, Cleaver, Dennis, Humphrey, Lone Star, and Parker of the request for information and of their right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and

explain applicability of exception in the Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note an interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from ABLe, All-Fair, Basecom, Cable, Cleaver, Dennis, Humphrey, Lone Star, or Parker explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude ABLe, All-Fair, Basecom, Cable, Cleaver, Dennis, Humphrey, Lone Star, or Parker has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the county may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest ABLe, All-Fair, Basecom, Cable, Cleaver, Dennis, Humphrey, Lone Star, or Parker may have in the information.

Some of the submitted information is subject to section 552.136 of the Government Code.¹ Section 552.136 provides, "Notwithstanding any other provision of [the Act], a credit card, debit card, charge card, or access device number that is collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is confidential." Gov't Code § 552.136(b); *see id.* § 552.136(a) (defining "access device"). This office has determined insurance policy numbers are access device numbers for purposes of section 552.136. We understand the county has redacted some insurance policy numbers from the submitted information pursuant to section 552.136(c) of the Government Code.² The county must also withhold the remaining insurance policy numbers within the submitted information under section 552.136 of the Government Code.

We note some of the materials at issue may be protected by copyright. A custodian of public records must comply with the copyright law and is not required to furnish copies of records that are copyrighted. Open Records Decision No. 180 at 3 (1977). A governmental body must allow inspection of copyrighted materials unless an exception applies to the information. *Id.*; *see* Open Records Decision No. 109 (1975). If a member of the public

¹The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

²Section 552.136(c) of the Government Code allows a governmental body to redact the information described in section 552.136(b) without the necessity of seeking a decision from the attorney general. *See* Gov't Code § 552.136(c). If a governmental body redacts such information, it must notify the requestor in accordance with section 552.136(e). *See id.* § 552.136(d), (e).

wishes to make copies of copyrighted materials, the person must do so unassisted by the governmental body. In making copies, the member of the public assumes the duty of compliance with the copyright law and the risk of a copyright infringement suit.

In summary, the county must withhold the remaining insurance policy numbers within the submitted information under section 552.136 of the Government Code. The county must release the remaining information; however, any information that is subject to copyright may be released only in accordance with copyright law.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Claire V. Morris Sloan
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CVMS/som

Ref: ID# 636840

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

9 Third Parties
(w/o enclosures)